



B-QUAL Australia Pty Limited

ABN: 37 096 945 694

Produced by:

AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd on behalf of B-Qual Australia Pty Ltd

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NEWSLETTER

RENEWAL 2009/2010

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC). You will be aware that B-QUAL membership expires every year on 30 June. As a member of B-QUAL you are required to pay an annual renewal fee and be audited as prescribed. The 2009/2010 membership year was a busy year for B-QUAL behind the scenes. I am pleased to advise that B-QUAL as the industry owned QA Program remains the focus as regulators and industry supply chain demands are negotiated. The Board will continue to work with honey packers to assist beekeepers meet their supply chain requirements. Many packers have already provided clear signals to beekeepers that an audited quality assurance program is required. The SA Honeybee Industry Strategic Planning and Implementation Committee (HISPIC) is providing opportunities for beekeepers to meet their supply chain responsibilities.

The B-QUAL Environmental Code has been developed in line with the National Best Management Practice for Beekeeping in the Australian Environment. Pilot testing of this material will commence in Western Australia later in 2010. The Board of B-QUAL is mindful that not all beekeepers will participate in this module, but there are a number of beekeepers that require a documented system to demonstrate environmental commitment. If you are interested in getting involved in this project then contact B-QUAL.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members that have participated in an audit of their operations in the last 12 months. Many of these members have acknowledged that the audit process adds considerable benefits to their businesses. Although most audits have identified minor non-conformances, these non-conformances are not generally related to food safety or program integrity issues and therefore certification has been progressed in most instances.

Members should visit www.bqual.com.au to see the current materials available to all beekeepers participating in B-QUAL.

As Chairman of B-QUAL, I would ask for your cooperation in the renewal process. Please:

1. Make the payment of \$110 (inc. GST) to B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd either by cheque or credit card; \$55 if you are a recreational beekeeper; and
2. Mail the remittance advice and payment back to B-QUAL, C/o AUS-QUAL, PO Box 3403, Tingalpa DC, QLD 4173;

If payment of the enclosed invoice is not received by 31st August 2010, you will be sent a further reminder during September. Should you not respond following that reminder, your membership to B-QUAL may be cancelled.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in anticipation of your ongoing support for B-QUAL. We trust that the annual renewal process runs smoothly for your enterprise.

Barry Pobke
Chairman
B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd

COMMUNICATION

B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd remains wholly owned by AHBIC.

The Program is administered by AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd as the National Service Provider. AUS-QUAL reports to the B-QUAL Board as directed.

Audits are conducted by AUS-QUAL contracted auditors that are registered with an Accredited personnel certification enterprise known as RABQSA. Both AUS-QUAL and RABQSA are accredited by JAS-ANZ (Joint Accreditation Standards Australia and New Zealand).

B-QUAL may be contacted by:

Web: www.bqual.com.au
Fee call: 1800 630 890
E-Mail: ausqual@ausqual.com.au
Phone: (07) 3361 9200
Fax: (07) 3361 9222

RESOURCES

SELF LEARNING PACKS

These are available directly from B-QUAL for \$210+GST. It contains step by step learning material to assist you in achieving recognition towards Certificate II in Agriculture (Beekeeping) then progress to complete B-QUAL certification.

All enquiries to B-QUAL.

RECORD BOOKS

Financial members of B-QUAL may purchase Extracting Record Books and Apiary Record Books from B-QUAL at a cost of \$5.00 + GST.

LOGOS

B-QUAL Logos now available to purchase.
150mm – \$7.00 300mm – \$16.00
500mm – \$40 (to be pre-ordered)

Newly certified B-QUAL participants will receive 1 x 150mm sticker free with the certification documents.

Contact B-QUAL to place your order.

SA goes BEE QA

The SA Honeybee Industry Strategic Planning and Implementation Committee (HISPIC) believes that requiring all South Australian honey producers to be in a Quality Assurance program is an important step forward for the South Australian apiary industry. South Australian apiarists are leaders in implementing QA, so we have a good start.

The food sector both nationally and internationally has largely implemented QA such that it is now increasingly becoming a requirement along the entire supply chain; with importers telling their suppliers that QA is now a mandatory requirement if they wish to continue conducting business with them, and the big retailers pressing for QA from all their suppliers.

Your honey packers are work under these same requirements and so support the introduction of HISPIC's incentive of requiring all honey producers to be in an industry approved HACCP based third party audited QA program. All packers have been very supportive. I believe all packers will increasingly differentiate their buying price to reflect their QA requirements.

Three HACCP based third party audited QA providers in SA are offering one day training packages for their respective programs at attractive rates. They will all have components that cover all aspects of beekeeping and the production of honey for sale to a packer, as well as components for those who wish to pack honey. We will also ensure that they all have components that cover pollen production, queen breeding and pollination.

Industry approved QA programs address honey safety, honey quality and biosecurity. Whilst consumers demand food safety and quality, HISPIC also sees value in QA programs for their inherent ability to trace the movement of hives, hive material and hive products. This traceability is a critical tool in the control and eradication of endemic diseases such as AFB, and exotic pests such as Varroa. The annual requirement of supply AFB test results can be incorporated into the QA programs biosecurity element. Further and importantly, HISPIC is convinced that industry-wide implementation of industry approved QA will greatly assist in the eradication and/or management of Varroa, and ensure industry is better able to meet this new challenge.

Many of the apiarists undertaking pollination for orchardists and small seed producers will know that these industries also have biosecurity requirements and that increasingly their suppliers, you as apiarists, need to be able to demonstrate that they are meeting their biosecurity requirements. This can include criteria such as ensuring you are not transporting weed seeds, and that you are implementing BeeSMART AFB (in SA) to assist in the prevention of AFB in high bee density pollination areas.

Implementing a QA program is not a big deal, particularly for those already managing bees and producing honey according to industry best practice; in most cases the main change will be recording what already occurs. For others, some improvements/upgrades will need to be undertaken to their plant and/or procedures, such as installing easy to clean surfaces or implementing better rodent control, however the reality is that these are all requirements demanded of the honey industry in the twenty first Century.

The reality is that state governments are unlikely to provide large amounts of funding for apiary management programs and return to the good old days of routine apiary inspection. QA programs that encompass all apiarists can provide a real management option for the industry. The challenge is to be reasonable and design schemes and regulations that allow for the big range in size of apiaries and keep the costs down. The South Australia Bee Society is very supportive and are currently working with HISPIC to develop a QA program that will be appropriate for the very small operators.

SA apiarists are embracing this QA drive and lining up to attend their QA training days which is fantastic to see.

Cheers,

Gerald

Chairman – Honey Industry Strategic Planning & Implementation Committee Agresults Pty Ltd
"Colville" PO Box 737 WILLUNGA SA 5172 Ph: 08 8556 2900 Mob: 0418 812 013 Email: gerald@agresults.com.au

INTERNAL AUDITS

The B-QUAL program requires that you conduct an Internal Audit of your operation every 12 months. The purpose of an Internal Audit is:

- To check that the quality system activities and related results comply with planned arrangements,
- To check that these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives,

Procedures on how to conduct an Internal Audit are included in your B-QUAL Approved Supplier Program Manual (Work Instruction 17).

Findings of the Internal Audit are to be recorded. A checklist is included in your B-QUAL Approved Supplier Program Manual (Record 11). An additional checklist has been provided with this newsletter. Keep it as a spare and make copies to use for recording your Internal Audit findings.

Make sure you file the record to present to the external auditor.

IS YOUR B-QUAL CERTIFICATION CURRENT?

Feedback received from the industry indicates there is some confusion about the requirements to maintain your B-QUAL certification.

Payment of your annual membership fees alone does not mean you are automatically provided with ongoing certification.

To maintain certification you are required to pay your annual membership fee **PLUS** have an external audit every two years (once every year for those packing and selling to the public). The certification of those beekeepers that have not had their audit within the required timeframe is cancelled.

Please contact B-QUAL if you are not sure about the current status of your B-QUAL certification.



B-QUAL AUSTRALIA PTY LIMITED

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B-Qual Program

Under South Australia's Food Act 2001, all food businesses and primary producers have a legal obligation to produce food that is safe and suitable for human consumption.

"A food safety program can provide you with the necessary evidence if someone challenges the integrity of your product."

"B-Qual" is an industry owned and developed food safety program that is based on the paddock to plate concept. It recognises that contaminants introduced in the field or during extraction cannot be removed during further processing.

The same steps necessary to produce a "clean green honey crop" play a big role in American Foulbrood control and eradication (referred to in the program as Biosecurity Standards).

Honey packers are (or will be in the near future) requiring their suppliers to implement food safety based programs - not for legislative reasons, but in order to meet their customer's requirements and thereby maintain access to domestic and export markets.

B-Qual is a cost effective and easy to use system for apiarists and honey processing businesses, that meets National and State food safety requirements for honey sales (on both domestic and export markets) as well as demonstrating to honey packers the safety of your honey producing processes.

The B-Qual program covers:

- Hive management (identification, location, movement and disease status)
- Extraction
- Hygiene (personal, machinery maintenance & sanitation, vermin control)
- Purchases (inventory lists, stocktake activities)
- Equipment calibration
- Internal and external audit results
- Staff training register
- Occupational Health & Safety issues.

The program provides comprehensive work instructions, and records that are required to be kept, on each of these sections.

B-QUAL WORKSHOPS

A number of B-Qual workshops have been scheduled for South Australian apiarists during August 2010.

| Keith | Murray Bridge | Clare | Loxton | KI |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 21 Aug 2010 | 22 Aug 2010 | 23 Aug 2010 | 24 Aug 2010 | 26 Aug 2010 |

Note: all venues & dates are dependent on there being sufficient participants. If you are unable to attend one of these venues, you may be able to arrange another venue with B-QUAL at a later time.

1. **B-Qual Training** (Day 1) **COST: \$55 inc GST** (payable to B-Qual Australia with Registration)

This course is designed to prepare you for implementing your B-Qual program. It includes understanding HACCP, risk management, developing work instructions, implementation of a Food Safety Plan, operational hygiene, sampling and biosecurity.

Participants are provided with comprehensive notes containing sample documents for a food safety/risk management plan, work instructions and records.

Upon successful completion of the training day, you will be issued a Statement of Attainment which is recognised as partial completion of Certificate II in Agriculture (Beekeeping) under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

The full B-Qual manual will be available to purchase for \$115.50 inc GST (50% discount) at the end of the workshop. All you need to do is read the documents provided, make any changes to the work instructions so that they better reflect what you do, and start keeping records.

You have now started to implement your B-Qual system!

2. **B-Qual Audit** **COST: \$420 inc GST**

Once you have completed the changes to your Manual and implemented the program in your operation, then simply contact B-Qual to arrange for an audit. Accreditation to B-Qual is obtained upon successful completion of the audit.



B-Qual Audit Request

Please send completed form to:

**AUS-QUAL Pty Limited,
PO Box 3403, Tingalpa DC, QLD 4173
Fax to 07 3361 9222.**

Contact Details

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Business Name _____ | ABN/ACN _____ | |
| Contact Person : _____ | | |
| Phone: _____ | Fax: _____ | Mobile _____ |
| Email address: _____ | | |
| Postal Address: _____ | | |
| Town/city: _____ | State _____ | Postcode: _____ |
| Location Address _____ | Postcode: _____ | |

Location Map

Please draw a rough map to assist the auditor in reaching you (attach another page if required)

Assessment Details (Please return this form)

Ideally, your B-Qual audit should take place when honey is being extracted, but if you are not extracting this does not stop your audit being progressed. The audit does not require a visit to your apiary site/s.

When do you expect to be ready for your B-Qual Audit? Call **1800 630 890** if you would like to discuss.

Please nominate a month that would best suite your operation to have an audit conducted.

Month: _____

Nominate a specific date that suits you: ____/____/ 2010

B-QUAL PRIVACY STATEMENT

The information being collected may be personal information. B-Qual collects this information for the purpose of providing and assisting B-Qual improve its program. Any personal information that is collected by B-Qual is for that purpose only. B-Qual respects the privacy of individuals. Generally B-Qual does not release personal information. However, in response to a legal requirement, in an emergency or in exceptional circumstances the Chairperson may at their discretion authorise the release of personal information. In all other circumstances the B-Qual privacy policy governs the collection, the use and disclosure of personal information.